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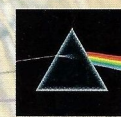
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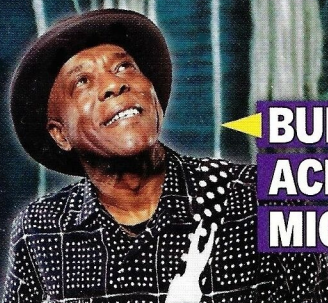
HENDRIX AT WOODSTOCK

THE PERFORMANCE THAT CHANGED THE GUITAR...AND THE WORLD!

» RARE INTERVIEWS WITH
JIMI'S WOODSTOCK BAND:
COX, MITCHELL & LEE

» SNEAK PREVIEW
OF THE NEW EXPANDED
WOODSTOCK DVD

▶ **BUDDY GUY** On His Greatest Recordings
ACE FREHLEY On His Favorite Guitar Tracks
MICK MARS Answers Your Questions



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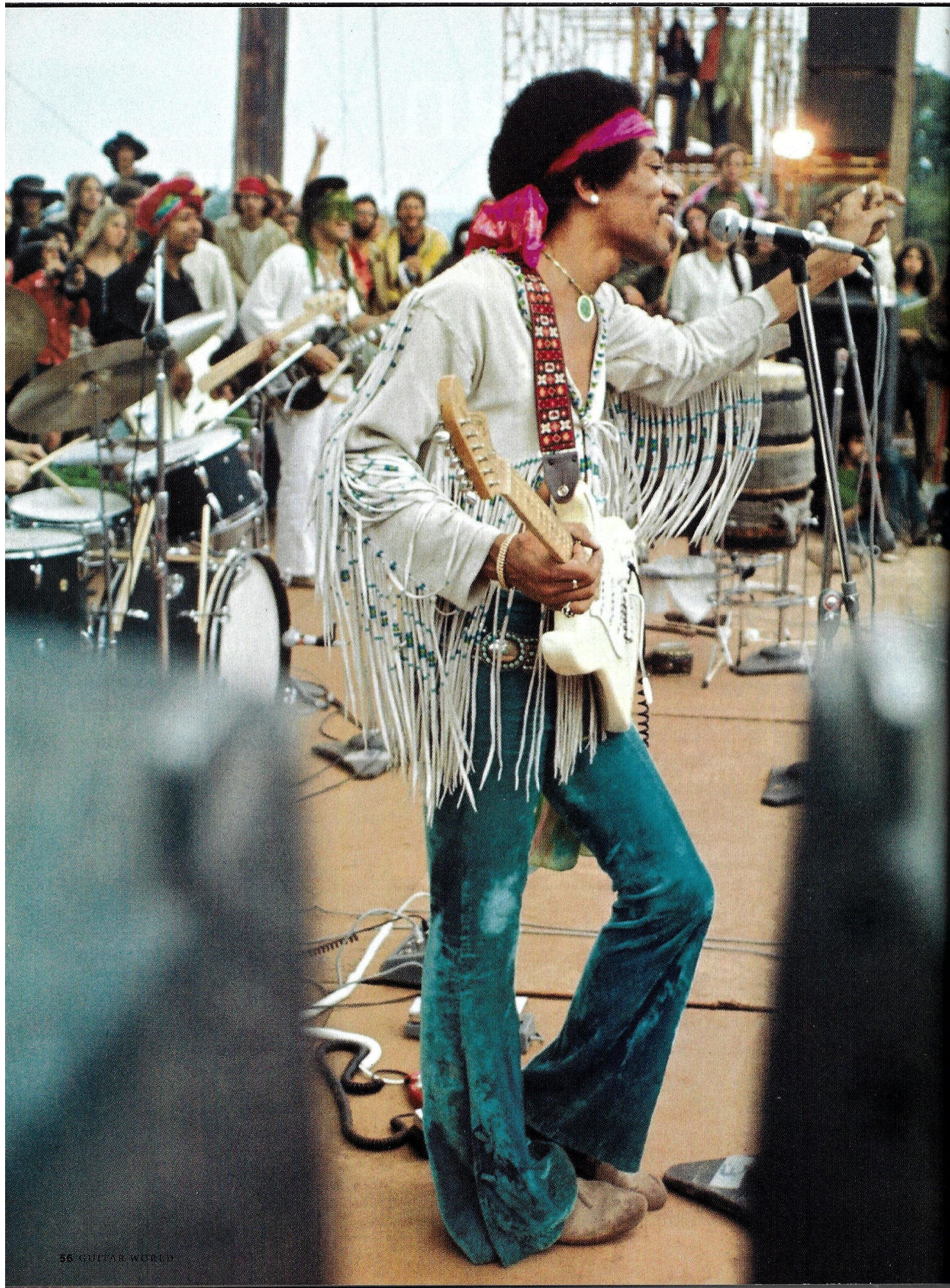
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Jimi Hendrix learned at his feet. Eric Clapton calls him "the greatest living guitarist." On the eve of his new release, *I Got Dreams*, blues legend Buddy Guy reflects on his greatest recordings.

Cover Photograph by **ALLAN KOSS**
Cover Inset by **RAYON RICHARDS**







STAR POWER

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, **JIMI HENDRIX'S** RHYTHM SECTION—DRUMMER **MITCH MITCHELL** AND BASSIST **BILLY COX**—GET TOGETHER TO DISCUSS JIMI'S LEGENDARY WOODSTOCK PERFORMANCE. *by Andy Aledort*

IT IS A TYPICALLY BEAUTIFUL early summer day in downtown Nashville, Tennessee. As I sit in the exquisite lobby of the five-star Hermitage Hotel, beneath the intricately detailed and expansive stained glass ceiling, the 97-degree weather has given way to a torrential downpour, the likes of which have not been seen since the Great Flood.

Seated on the Louis XIV-style couch in front of me are Mitch Mitchell and Billy Cox, the trailblazing rhythm section that laid the foundation beneath legendary rock guitar genius Jimi Hendrix during the last 16 months of his incendiary career. Mitchell is without question one of rock's greatest drummers, his unique, propulsive virtuoso

style exemplified on masterful Jimi Hendrix Experience tracks like "Hey Joe," "Manic Depression," "Purple Haze," "Spanish Castle Magic," and "1983... (A Merman I Should Turn to Be)." Billy Cox, best known for his bass work with Jimi in the Band of Gypsies, was one of Jimi's first musical comrades: the two met while stationed in the army at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in November 1961, and they immediately struck up a strong, lifelong musical relationship.

"We found that we had a lot in common," Cox says of meeting Hendrix, then a 19-year-old guitarist. "Right away, I heard something in his guitar playing that captivated me. I knew this was a guy I wanted to hook up with." They immediately formed a band and, one month later, moved in

together in Clarksville, Tennessee. By 1963, Hendrix had hit the road as a backup guitarist for the likes of Little Richard, Ike and Tina Turner and the Isley Brothers. When his big break came in 1966 via producer/Animals bassist Chas Chandler's invitation to go to Europe and form his own band, Hendrix reached out to Cox, who was unable to make the commitment. Within a month, Hendrix had signed on Noel Redding as bassist and Mitchell as his number-one drummer.

As fate would have it, Cox and Mitchell did eventually get to play together behind Hendrix, making their debut as a rhythm section at the legendary Woodstock Music and Arts Festival, on August 18, 1969. While the festival has taken on mythic proportions over the years, Hendrix's

"THE WOODSTOCK REHEARSALS WERE EXTREMELY INFORMAL. IT WAS A WILD SCENE UP THERE, BETWEEN TRYING TO KEEP THE GROUPIES AND OTHER CHARACTERS AWAY." —BILLY COX

performance at Woodstock has never been accorded the attention given to much of his recorded output. That situation has been rectified with the new two-disc DVD *Jimi Hendrix: Live at Woodstock Special Edition* (Experience Hendrix), which restores the guitarist's performance with loving care. All of the existing footage of Hendrix at Woodstock is presented uninterrupted, re-edited

and in its original performance sequence. The set gives fans a chance to view previously unavailable performances of "Foxy Lady," "Message to Love," "Hey Joe," "Spanish Castle Magic" and "Lover Man." Best of all, the soundtrack includes 5.1 and 2.0 soundtracks mixed by Eddie Kramer, Hendrix's original engineer. Among the numerous DVD extras are new interviews with Woodstock promoter

Michael Lang, Mitchell, Cox, and Hendrix band members Larry Lee and Juma Sultan; privately shot and never-before-seen black-and-white video of much of the guitarist's Woodstock performance; a Hendrix press conference filmed at Frank's Restaurant in Harlem on September 3, 1969, two weeks after Woodstock; and Eddie Kramer's recollections of recording the entire festival.

LAN KOSS (HENDRIX)

Hendrix and the Gypsy Sun and Rainbows ensemble performing at Woodstock some time after 9 a.m. on Monday, August 18, 1969. Only about 25,000 of the festival's reported half million attendees were on hand to witness this final set of the event.



Although Mitchell and Cox fell out of contact after Hendrix's death, they hooked up again in recent years. Today, the camaraderie between them is undeniable. "Billy and I reconnected about four or five years ago," says Mitchell, "and I am so grateful. We have such a nice comfort zone together, both personally and on a musical level. We push each other in a really nice way, and that's what I think musicians need from each other. That's what we are here for. I am lucky to have such a good friend as Bill."

GUITAR WORLD Your first gig together was at the mother of all rock festivals, Woodstock, in 1969. Bill, when did you first hear from Jimi about joining back up with him?

BILLY COX We had hooked up in Memphis, Tennessee, in April of '69, and Jimi told me he wanted me to come up to New York to be his bass player for some recording sessions. So a few weeks later [in early May], I flew to New York and we immediately began working on new songs together. He was overdue for another album at the time; the latest thing that had come out was *Smash Hits*, a greatest-hits package. Jimi didn't have much new music prepared, so there was a lot of work to do.

Jimi and myself—sometimes along with [drummer] Buddy Miles and sometimes with Mitch—sat down and began putting new, fresh rhythmic patterns and riff ideas together in order to create some new songs.

GW You and Jimi spent a lot of time jamming and performing together while in the army and afterward, when you lived together in Tennessee in 1962 and 1963. Did any of these song ideas date back to those days?

COX Actually, some of these things did date back to our earlier days together. We revisited these things and added



Mitch Mitchell (left) and Billy Cox in Nashville, June 2005.

new ideas to them. Our routine became this: I'd go over to his apartment in the morning, we'd practice for half the day, eat some lunch, and then practice and write for the entire rest of the day.

GW Were the two of you working creatively from the start?

COX Definitely. We always had fun when we played together. Playing music was the thing both of us liked doing more than anything else. We didn't play golf, we didn't bowl, we didn't go fishing—we played music. It was our hobby, but it was also our profession. We loved doing it. The more time we spent together, the more in sync we got, and all of the new songs started to come together.

GW Even though you were writing with Jimi in his hotel room and recording in the studio, Noel Redding was still the bassist for the live shows, correct?

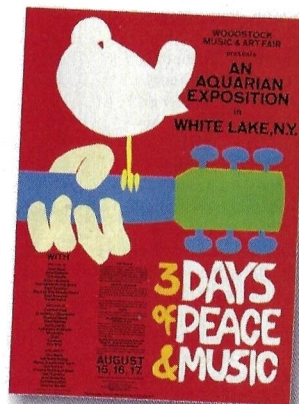
COX Right. I wasn't officially in the group yet. Jimi was fulfilling his commitments with the original Jimi Hendrix Experience at that time. I was helping Jimi get his head together and find his new direction.

MITCH MITCHELL It was a strange time, a bit of a weird transition period, really. Actual fact, Noel [Redding] was trying to get his band Fat Mattress together—which Jimi liked to refer to as Thin Pillow!—so they could open shows for the Jimi Hendrix Experience. It was a bit of a con game: he was trying to get paid twice for the same gig, playing guitar with his own band and then playing bass with ours. This used to really peeve off Jimi.

GW It's been well reported that there was a lot of tension in the Experience between Jimi and Noel. Jimi was starting to use other musicians—bass players among them—and had also recorded many of the bass parts on the

JHE recordings himself. Plus, Noel wanted to write more for the group.

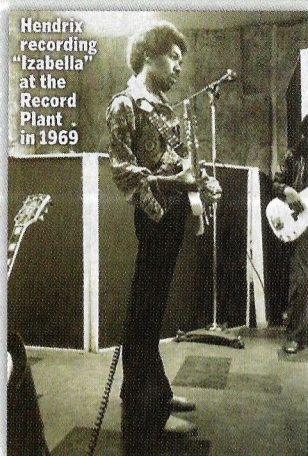
MITCHELL There was a variety of issues. If Jimi and I presented anything in, say, a Motown style to Noel, he'd react negatively. At the time, the only music Noel listened to was two albums by the Small Faces. The Small Faces were great, but that's not where our heads were at. Noel had no knowledge of [legendary R&B/soul bassist] James Jamerson



or the guys that played with James Brown. The bigger problem was that he had no interest, either. Billy, on the other hand, was a *bassist*; he had put the work in on the instrument. Noel, God rest his soul, had no interest in the bass as an instrument.

GW In the early part of '69, it seemed that things were good within the original Experience trio: the January performance on *It's Lulu* [U.K. TV variety show] was excellent, and the Royal Albert Hall show on February 24, 1969, is considered by some to be the best show the Experience ever played.

MITCHELL The *Lulu* show was fun. If you are asking my opinion, though, the second



Hendrix recording "Izabella" at the Record Plant in 1969

Albert Hall show was adequate, and the first show [February 18] was absolute crap! You see, there were management things going on that drove us crazy. [Jimi's manager] Mike Jeffery had put together a package show with us, the Soft Machine, the Eire Apparent and a few other bands, depending on the venue, plus this film crew led by Jerry Goldstein and Steve Gold. These film guys were costing us an arm and a leg; they were in our way, and they were

incompetent in that they couldn't record or film anything adequately. Consequently, the first Albert Hall show was a disaster.

With the Experience, we had done a

festival show at Devonshire Downs [called "Newport '69" at San Fernando Valley State College, June 22, 1969] and we played like shit, frankly. We were getting paid a lot of money for this gig [reportedly \$125,000, the largest fee ever at that time], and we had become so wrapped up in our financial situation that all we could think of was the amount of money we were making per minute. Jimi was so disgusted that he had the balls to go back two days later and play with Buddy Miles for free, to try to save face. In a way, the second Albert Hall show was similar in that we knew we had to make amends for the first show.

GW Mitch, in the spring of '69, had Jimi spoken to you about bringing in Billy Cox as the new bass player?

MITCHELL Jimi and I had spoken about replacing Noel a few times over a couple of years, because there was always a lot of frustration there. I'm sure he had told (continued on page 92)

WAR HERO

IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW, LARRY LEE TELLS HOW HE WAS DRAFTED TO BECOME JIMI HENDRIX'S RHYTHM GUITARIST AT WOODSTOCK. BY JOHN McDERMOTT

BY AUGUST 1969, Jimi Hendrix was at the height of his popularity and influence, but beneath the thin veneer of critical praise and swelling box office receipts, disorder had begun to affect his life and career. With respect to the latter, Hendrix's incessant itinerary of touring, recording and personal appearances had frayed the Jimi Hendrix Experience beyond immediate repair. Bassist Noel Redding left after the group's June 29, 1969, appearance at the Denver Pop Festival, and the Jimi Hendrix Experience ran aground.

Two months before Redding's departure, Hendrix had already begun working behind the scenes to set his next plan in motion. He looked to reunite with his old music buddies from Nashville, where he'd lived for a while following his discharge from the U.S. Army. He reached first for bassist Billy Cox, with whom he had served in the army and later on the margins of the famed R&B chitlin circuit. With Cox onboard, Hendrix then sought out guitarist Larry Lee. Lee was a trusted friend whose connection to Cox and Hendrix could be traced to their days in the

King Kasuals, a Nashville-based combo that served as the house band at the Del Morocco Club, a popular R&B hangout.

Fresh from service in Vietnam, Lee reunited with Cox and Hendrix and, soon after, found himself performing with both men at the famed Woodstock music festival. Although Lee's tenure with Hendrix was ultimately short, he soon became a fixture within the burgeoning Memphis R&B scene. Word of his skills made him an in-demand guitarist for recording sessions at Stax, the Memphis-based label at which Albert King cut his best-selling sides. Lee's work here attracted the attention of R&B singer Al Green and led to their musical union, which lasted more than a decade. Today, Lee remains an active guitarist and frequently lends his talents to a host of blues and R&B recordings from his base in Memphis.

GUITAR WORLD How did you meet Billy Cox and Jimi Hendrix?

LARRY LEE They were onstage together at the Del Morocco. I was a student at

Tennessee State [University] and living off campus, about three blocks away. I would go down to the Del Morocco to hear the music.

GW Were they playing blues or a mixture of Top 40 R&B?

LEE Mostly Top 40 R&B. They had a singer and played a little blues at that time. I didn't hear Jimi doing much singing. If he did, it would be background vocals. He never led a song.

GW Did he show signs of his unique talents back then, or was he still very raw?

LEE Well, the first time I saw him, I thought he was the worst guitar player I ever heard. I was looking for a practice buddy, and I thought, This is him. I was just happy that I wasn't the worst guitar player in Nashville. [laughs] The thing is, he was playing an old guitar and the strings were barely staying on it. Jimi was just doing the best he could. Alfonso Young, the other guitar player, he had a big pretty guitar, and Jimi was just laying back, really doing nothing.

When I came back a couple of weeks later, Jimi had a different guitar, and man, did he surprise me! His (continued on page 197)

Lee at the Record Plant in 1969



WOODSTOCK (continued from page 60)

me about Billy, and when we finally did play together for the very first time, we probably just nodded at each other and got right to it!

COX That's right! [laughs] We just jumped in together, and with the three of us, it sounded good to me right away.

MITCHELL I have some film of those early sessions, in fact. I can't speak for Jimi, but Billy's presence on the bass immediately took a lot of weight off of me, which I greatly appreciated! I was now playing with a real bass player, and it was great.

GW Billy, when you first came to New York, didn't you do some gigs as the bassist for the Buddy Miles Express, which Jimi was producing at the time?

COX Right. While Jimi was finishing up his commitments with the original Experience, Buddy told me he liked my playing and asked me to join his band. I had to learn his whole album within a week—I slept with it!—and then I did a handful of gigs with him till Jimi was ready for me.

MITCHELL Jimi and I had different musical tastes—he turned me on to Dylan lyrics and I used to play him [jazz saxophonists] John Coltrane and Roland Kirk—but we did see eye to eye in the bass-player department. Noel, bless his heart, went to see Bob Dylan once at a gig

in Ireland, and Bob told Noel that he liked his bass playing on Jimi's recording of Bob's "All Along the Watchtower" [*Electric Ladyland*], which, of course, is really Jimi on bass. It was just so much easier to make records with just Jimi and myself, because Jimi was one hell of a bass player. In actual fact, he played better bass when he played a right-handed bass upside down!

GW When Jimi played bass during a session, did it change your approach to the drums?

MITCHELL Most definitely. Jimi was so solid, I could actually play *less* and leave more space; those were some of the only times when I wasn't compelled to overplay, at least until Billy came onto the scene.

Jimi and I were always aware that we needed a funky, rock-solid bass player. I had some fantasies about really fattening up the bottom end, by getting [jazz legend] Larry Young on organ, maybe Howard Johnson on tuba, along with a killer bassist. I wanted overkill, miles of low end!

I was once doing an album in New York and was asked who I'd like as a bassist on the session, so, being a bit of a wise guy, I said Chuck Rainey on electric bass and Richard Davis on standup. The next day, *they were there!* Richard had his lion-headed acoustic bass, and Chuck had his convertible Ampeg B-15 amp and Fender Jazz Bass, and he parked

himself right next to me. It was wonderful.

GW In working on Jimi's previous studio effort, *Electric Ladyland*, he had expressed in the press a strong desire to work with different musicians in the pursuit of new musical forms.

MITCHELL That's true. Jimi and I had both become very disillusioned with the situation with the band. It was becoming increasingly difficult to break new ground. We encouraged each other to play with as many different people as possible, and there were a handful of people who had played with us in the studio and live, such as Buddy Miles, Steve Winwood [of *Traffic*] and Jack Casady [of *the Jefferson Airplane*]. The studio was where Jimi lived; in truth, if he could have lived in the studio 24 hours a day, he would have. The studio was a natural instrument for Jimi, one with which he possessed an uncanny ability to express himself.

Billy, I've got to ask you something: did you ever work with Buddy—who was so solid we used to refer to him as the "concrete mixer"—on any studio dates other than with Jimi?

COX No, I only worked in the studio with Buddy and Jimi together, never just Buddy. There have always been rumors to that effect, but the answer is no.

MITCHELL I once asked Buddy to come and sit in with Jimi and Noel at Winterland in '68

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just because I wanted to hear what the band sounded like! [laughs]

GW Billy, immediately after you arrived in New York, you and Jimi recorded a number of times at the Record Plant, right from the start forging arrangements of new compositions like "Earth Blues," "Message to Love" [originally titled "Message to the Universe"] and "Straight Ahead," as well as the complex masterpiece "Power of Soul." How did that song come together?

COX I was playing an old Ray Charles song called "Mary Ann," which has some similar bass patterns, and Jimi heard it, picked up on it and then wrote new riffs for it. All of those new songs, like "Dolly Dagger," came together during that spring and summer. With "Dolly," we were up at the house in Woodstock [actually Shokan, New York], and one morning I started to play a riff that sounded like Big Ben, [sings] "Da-da-da-da, Da-da-da-da," and Jimi added a twist to try to top me. Then I'd play another line to try to top his, and of course he'd end up topping me every time! So that's how we worked together, and it was always fun and with a good musical spirit.

MITCHELL I noticed from the get-go that there was genuine warmth between Billy and Jimi. I didn't know anything about their relationship beforehand from their army days;

I just knew that they went back to the chitlin circuit together. But they would spend a lot of time together, working on music as partners; this was the first time in my three years with Jimi that he'd ever had anyone to work with like this and bounce ideas off.

In Billy, I also saw someone that was prepared to play on Jimi's level, and had real enthusiasm about the work and was willing to sit for hours and hours getting things together. This was right from the start, way before the Band of Gypsys [Jimi's subsequent three-piece group with Billy and drummer Buddy Miles]. There was a synchronicity; there was contact. For me to see my friend Jimi getting his socks off being able to play off someone else was really great; he'd never had that before, for as long as I'd known him. I saw it and I felt it.

GW So Jimi's daily routine changed dramatically?

MITCHELL Oh, definitely. I'd leave Jimi's 12th Street apartment and he and Billy would stay there and continue working on music for hours, however long it took them to get the new ideas together. The feeling was so great.

COX Then we'd put these ideas down on tape—we always had our little tape recorders running. After rehearsal, we'd get some sandwiches, listen back to the tape, and then I'd go back to where I was staying, listen to the

tape some more, and I'd think, Oh, I'm gonna improve on this tomorrow, and Jimi would be thinking the same thing. Then we'd come back together with more ideas the next morning. He'd say, "Listen to this!" and I'd say, "Oh yeah? Well, listen to this!" [laughs]

GW While the original Experience were playing live shows throughout May 1969, Jimi returned to New York on a half dozen occasions to record new songs in the studio with Billy and a variety of other musicians. The spring tour culminated on June 29 at the Denver Pop Festival, after which Noel Redding left the band. In July, Jimi moved to Shokan in upstate New York to prepare for the upcoming Woodstock show on August 18, ultimately settling on a lineup of Larry Lee on guitar, Billy on bass, Jerry Velez and Juma Sultan on percussion and Mitch on drums, and called the new ensemble Gypsy Sun and Rainbows. What are your recollections of that time?

MITCHELL The first thing is, we didn't know that we'd come to the end of the Experience. It was never defined. Billy and I had done a bit of playing in the studio together, and it was always good. But regarding Noel, there was nothing definitive one way or the other. There was this "floating" situation, wherein Noel was concentrating on Fat Mattress, I had gone back to England, and Jimi began working with some of the guys that



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ended up at Woodstock. I felt in my heart that Jimi and I would work together again and never gave it a thought, but nothing whatsoever was discussed.

COX It was a little awkward, because no definite plans were laid out. Jimi expressed to me that he was tired of the trio format and he wanted to make some changes. He tried an expanded lineup at Woodstock, but ultimately the bigger group didn't work out. Personally, I like the trio concept best.

MITCHELL I got a call in July asking if I'd consider coming to New York to prepare for the Woodstock show. I'd lived up there before, at Mike Jeffrey's house, so I knew the area well and liked it very much. And I only got

the call because something wasn't happening up there, I suppose. [To Cox] Didn't you guys have another drummer at one point?

COX Yes, we had played some with Phil Wilson, from the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, but that was really just jamming. I think Jimi knew he really wanted Mitch to be the drummer.

MITCHELL When I got to the house, it was a shambles! A ramshackle house—with some very nice people, like Claire [Morice] the cook—but I had my doubts from the beginning. The world and his wife was up there. To see Jimi riding a horse was a sight to behold! [laughs]

COX I have a picture of Mitch falling off his horse!

MITCHELL I remember that Eric Barrett, the roadie, had an air rifle, and when he fired it he shattered the windscreen on Mike Jeffrey's jeep! It wasn't intentional...of course! It was craziness up there, for sure.

I think I have a realistic view of this period and, for me, my memories of the Woodstock situation are that it was not brilliant, musically. It was fortunate that Billy and I had played together a little bit beforehand, because the percussion players, Jerry Velez and Juma Sultan, didn't really cut it for me, no offense intended. I was very grateful that at least Billy and I had begun to forge a strong musical bond.

COX We had each other, and we knew where we were each coming from, musically speaking.

MITCHELL We knew where we sat together. I do think the other players were out of their element, because it is a difficult thing to be thrown into what had been, for Jimi and myself, a well-established working relationship, one that had lasted nearly three years at that point. These guys were thrust into the limelight, and I think they were in awe to a certain degree.

GW Though the band sounds rough hewn at times, there are certainly many brilliant moments during the Woodstock performance.

MITCHELL What most people don't realize

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is that the sound equipment in those days was sorely lacking, especially when it came to monitors. I had *nothing*, so I had to rely on watching people's hands. You couldn't hear what you were doing, so it made it very tricky. As an ensemble, the Woodstock band, to me, left something to be desired.

GW One of the highlights of the Woodstock show was the great new material that was showcased, such as "Izabella," "Message to Love," "Jam Back at the House" [later retitled "Beginnings"] and "Villanova Junction."

COX "Villanova Junction" [the slow A minor blues that culminates the Woodstock performance] was just a simple blues Jimi devised up at the house. That repeated melodic

riff is really just a takeoff on a typical Curtis Mayfield-type of melody, without really being based on any particular tune. It's the Curtis flavor.

MITCHELL Jimi "stole" from everywhere; if it was out there, he'd take it and twist it into something else.

COX We hung out up at the house for about three weeks, and played a lot, though the rehearsals were extremely informal. It was a wild scene up there, between trying to keep the groupies and other characters away. In truth, we all worked on music constantly, in spite of the "interruptions" and the general madness. The downstairs living room was the main practice room, with all of our big amps

and equipment, and upstairs was another practice room.

GW Bill, another cool thing was that you devised great new bass lines for many of the older Experience songs, such as "Fire" and "Spanish Castle Magic." You played these songs in your own unique way.

COX I gave them another flavor. Jimi encouraged me to add things in the gaps. He'd say, "What would you do there? Would you play a line going down? Going up? Add a different run?" Jimi had some specific things in mind for the bass parts; that's why he played the bass himself on so many of the studio recordings with the original Experience.

MITCHELL Noel didn't like it at all when Jimi told him what bass line to play. With Bill, there was always enthusiasm for any idea Jimi wanted to pursue. Bill would quickly grasp the structure of the tune, and then he'd add his own personality, which was great.

GW The Gypsy Sun and Rainbows band was unique in that it was the only time Jimi ever utilized a second guitarist. What was Jimi's history with guitarist Larry Lee?

COX Jimi knew Larry from our post-army days together in Tennessee. At the time, Larry had helped Jimi out quite a bit, guitar playing-wise, and Jimi respected Larry as a player. They were good companions. When we were first putting this group together, Jimi said to

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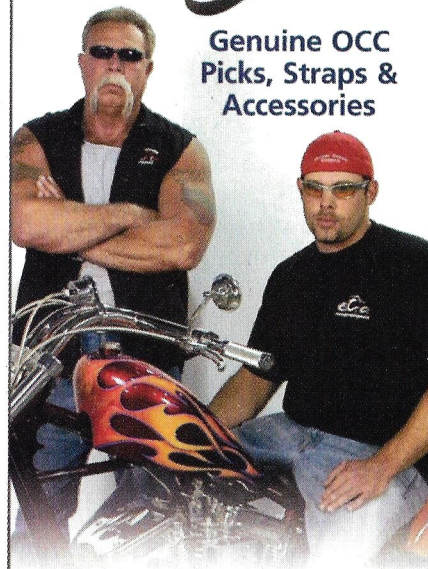
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me, "I've got to find Larry Leel!" So I did, and Larry showed up a few days later.

MITCHELL [To Cox] Bill, do you think Larry ever felt really comfortable working in that situation with us?

COX No, I don't. He came to me many times and said, "Look, Jimi is playing so much guitar; what is there for me to play?" Larry was a great player, and he had his important place in Jimi's earlier history. But by 1969, Jimi had evolved so much. They'd throw licks back and forth at each other, and a lot of it sounded good, but Larry felt that Jimi had come so far, and his own playing was not that effective. The truth is that any other guitar player would have sounded inadequate on-

stage next to Jimi. I said to Larry, "Let's do this gig, have a good time and take it from there."

GW Jimi was certainly encouraging of Larry in that he gave him many solos; they play some tandem/trade-off licks together; and the band also performed one of Larry's compositions, "Mastermind," at Woodstock.

COX Jimi was very encouraging of Larry in that I think he did like Larry's playing and he liked playing with him. Larry had also brought the Curtis Mayfield tune "Gypsy Woman" to the table, and when we played that song at Woodstock, Larry sang it and Jimi sang backup. In fact, Jimi, Larry and myself toured as the backup band for Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions back in the early Sixties for about a

dozen gigs within 150-mile radius of Nashville.

MITCHELL Jimi was the first person I ever met who could play all of those incredible Curtis Mayfield rhythm parts right off the top of his head. He knew that stuff backward and forward. Jimi retained so many different bits of knowledge, all across the board and in every style.

I could see that Jimi really respected Larry, and that Larry was a great player, but, unfortunately, I never really got the chance to know him.

COX There was so much happening then; it was really a crazy time. From my perspective, from the short time we had to get new things together with a new group of people, Woodstock was an incredible show, one that many people enjoyed, and still enjoy hearing today.

MITCHELL I know it's not a "romantic" viewpoint, but I can't help but think of the logistics of the Woodstock event, which were *trying*. The first major show I ever played with Jimi was the Monterey Festival [June 18, 1967], and it was so much better organized than Woodstock. At Woodstock, we were supposed to fly in by helicopter, but because there was mud *everywhere*, Mike Jeffrey had these ex-CIA guys drive us in a couple of rickety old station wagons, which took about five hours just because of the traffic and the mass of people.

We were due to go onstage at midnight to 1 A.M., as we were (continued on page 159)

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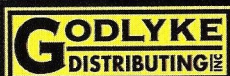
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the headliners of the three-day event. When we eventually arrived at the site, we asked, "Where is the dressing room?" We were told there were no dressing rooms, and they pointed to a cottage across a rotted, muddy field about a half a mile away. We went over there, tried to keep warm—my wife was pregnant, too—and then we had to wait about eight hours before we played. It was like an army maneuver! [laughs] Absolutely foul! I was also witness to a variety of, shall we say, *security breaches*... Things were pretty out of hand, to say the least.

I guess I do give a monkey's fart about the whole thing, but only if the music can hold up over the years. Back then, we never could have guessed that, all these years later, people would be listening to it and enjoying it for the very first time. I never sit and listen back to the stuff. In the *Monterey* film, for instance, I can see that we went out there and kicked some backsides.

COX From my perspective, the Woodstock Festival was history being made right before our eyes. So many people had converged on that one area, right at that moment. It was incredible. Woodstock was the mother of all of the rock festivals that followed.

GW In retrospect, Jimi's performance of the "Star Spangled Banner" that day is regarded as the shining moment of the Sixties youth movement; in those electrifying three minutes, he was able to capture the power, the beauty and the vibrancy that the Sixties counterculture has come to represent.

COX That was completely impromptu. I know Jimi had played it before on a few shows, but we hadn't played it or discussed it. If you listen to the recording carefully, you will hear me start playing along with him; I was glued into where he was at—his posture, and where he was going mentally and physically. When he started playing the "Star Spangled Banner," I started to play with him, but I got the feeling I should lay out, so that's what I did. I let him continue, which I think was the right thing to do. That was history—he wanted to make a statement, and what an incredible statement it was.

Some people have tried to interpret Jimi's version of the song as something negative, but it was really just a beautiful artistic statement. An electric guitar never sounded like that

before! And there was no negative connotation; let's not forget that Jimi had done his time in the army, the 101st Airborne Division. We fulfilled our obligation to our country and ourselves, and we left the army with pride. Jimi didn't burn his draft card, as some young people were doing at the time. He thought that was a deplorable thing to do. He played the "Star Spangled Banner" from his heart. He loved this country; it was something we had talked about a lot.

GW "Machine Gun" [*Band of Gypsies*] was another way Jimi expressed his feelings about

GW One of the tunes showcased at Woodstock, "Jam Back at the House," was later retitled "Beginnings" and credited to Mitch Mitchell, and features incredible polyrhythmic drum syncopations.

MITCHELL That was my tune, and thank you. It was really built from drum patterns I'd "stolen" from listening to Art Blakey and Elvin Jones and is based on African rhythms. This is something that was so wonderful, so pleasing, about working with Jimi, because he was so open to any musical suggestions and things came to him so naturally.

GW Following the Woodstock festival, the Gypsy Sun and Rainbows band made a few studio recordings in September but soon broke up.

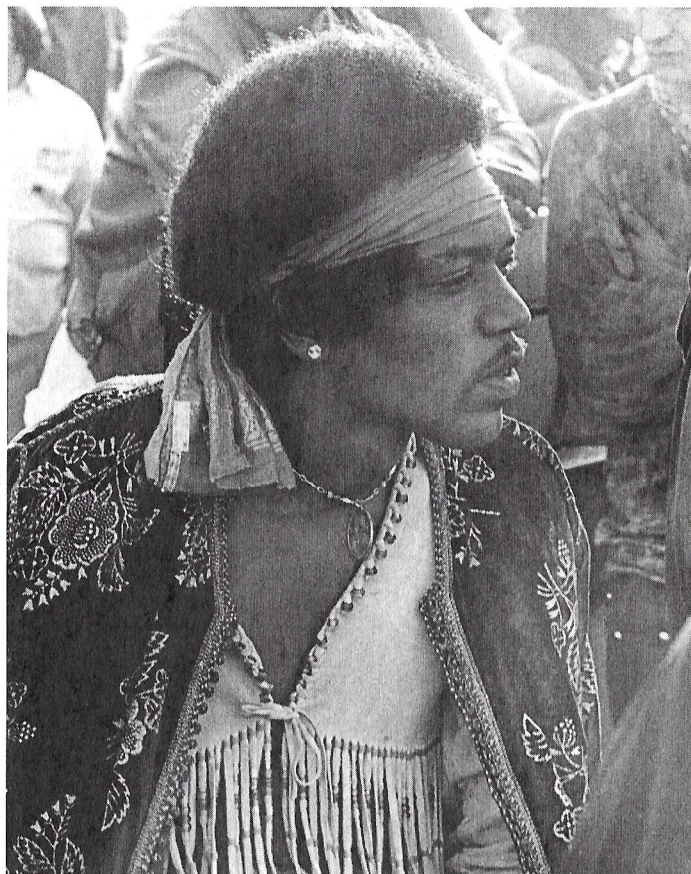
MITCHELL I think I can speak for Jimi when I say that, ultimately, he was not happy with that lineup and he knew things had to be changed once again.

COX The management were always giving us hell because we spent so much time writing and recording in the studio. Of course, here we are 35 years later and everyone praises us for the work we did!

MITCHELL That was why Jimi ended up putting his ass into so much debt with the building of the Electric Lady Studios. Owning his own studio was something Jimi wanted, and very much indeed.

GW It's been intimated that Jimi's management took an active role in disbanding this ensemble.

COX The truth is that there was a lot of tension in the air, in that the management was trying to pressure Jimi into changing things without regard for what



the country at that time.

COX War is nothing to be proud of. There will be wars as long as there are human beings, and it is very unfortunate that blood is shed. But it is a prophecy.

MITCHELL I am aware of and can appreciate the historical significance of that moment in retrospect. But in real terms, it was 9:00 in the morning; a lot of people had left because we were due to be on hours before; we were very tired, it was very cold and we couldn't hear ourselves. There's nothing worse than people saying to you, "Hey man, great show!" when you know that it wasn't. You know when you have played well, and that kind of thing would really bother Jimi a lot. I cannot romanticize Woodstock; I won't do it! If we went on earlier it would have been better, because, at the very least, the audience was completely *drained* by the time we did go on.

Jimi really wanted to do. These gun-carrying heavies would show up at the house with Mike Jeffrey, and things were a little scary. They wanted Jimi to put a different band together and go back out on tour immediately—they tried to force him to audition different players—but Jimi knew what he did and didn't want to do. Ultimately, there was no tour, so following the few commitments we had after Woodstock, I went back to Nashville and Mitch went back to England.

But I was back in New York about a month later, because part of what was going on involved what at that point had become a long-standing and unresolved legal issue with Ed Chalpin [*Hendrix had signed a recording contract with Chalpin back in 1966*]. Ultimately, the decision was made to give Chalpin an album as part of the settlement, which turned out to be *Band of Gypsies* [re-

corded by Hendrix, Cox and Buddy Miles under the name *Band of Gypsies*].

MITCHELL Jimi and I had always had a correspondence, even during the *Band of Gypsies* period [from November '69 through the end of January '70]. At the time, I worked in a group with [Cream bassist] Jack Bruce and [jazz-rock guitarist] Larry Coryell, and Jimi came to see our gigs at the Fillmore. I was still staying at Jimi's 12th Street apartment! And even during the *Band of Gypsies* period, Jimi called me and expressed some personality conflicts within the group, which had nothing to do with Billy I hasten to add.

My feeling is that, if Jimi were alive today, we would probably not have a regular band together, but I'm sure we would have always gotten back together for recording and to play shows. We did work with a few other lineups—horn players or what have you—so we got to explore that a little. Regrettably, we never got to further explore larger ensembles and different instrumentation with Billy.

GW After the fallout from the *Band of Gypsies*, Jimi's management decided that it'd

as him. To Jimi, the studio was just another instrument. The closest person to Jimi in that regard was Tommy Dowd [legendary Atlantic Records producer/engineer who worked with Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Cream, Derek & the Dominoes, Eric Clapton, the Allman Brothers, Ray Charles, etc.], who is generally and rightfully regarded as a genius.

GW One of the great things about a truly effective "power trio" lineup is that the three musicians learn how to make a huge, powerful sound with just one guitarist, a bass player and a drummer. The personality of each individual has to be very strong in order for the trio lineup to really work. This was true of Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker in Cream, and it was certainly true in the original Experience and also in Jimi's later trio with you both.

COX In a trio, each musician must carry a lot of weight. We three, as a band, knew how to do that, and we loved doing it. We enjoyed great communication with each other, visually and musically.

MITCHELL That's the deal. I have always

ried speaks for itself.

MITCHELL From my side, I was much more comfortable playingwise than I had been for a long time. Billy provided a great anchor, a solid bottom end, and he didn't use a plectrum! I hate the sound of the electric bass played with a plectrum! Billy's presence insured a much steadier and more reliable band sound, which made everything easier, and we were tighter. My only regret was that, before what turned out to be our last tour, we went about four weeks without playing, and some of those shows are not as together as I would have liked.

GW One of the highlights, musically, of the spring tour was the composition, "Hey Baby (The Land of the New Rising Sun)." How did this masterpiece come together?

COX In creating that song, Jimi and I started talking about our connections with classical music. My mother played classical music on the piano, and I developed a love for Beethoven, Bach and Chopin. Jimi had a love for this music too. If you listen to the way "Hey Baby" develops, it is like progressive movements in a classical piece. We had planned to further develop that song and to write more music along those lines. If we had another 10 years, there's no telling where our music would have gone.

MITCHELL The truth is, I don't think Jimi, Billy and I, as a band, ever got to see what we could really do in the studio, because, unfortunately, Jimi passed away. Right after Jimi's death, I attempted to put *The Cry of Love* together with Eddie Kramer, and that was really difficult and disconcerting. I just wish we three had had the chance to really play and record together in Electric Lady Studios much more than we had, in pursuit of what the vision for the future was.

COX That's right.

GW Do you two have any plans to play together again in the near future?

MITCHELL I would really love to play more with Billy, especially if we look back at our material with Jimi and create some interesting new arrangements. Billy's got it right when he says that we have a license to play this music, and I am excited about the prospect of our future collaborations. I'm lucky in that I am able to pick up a pair of drumsticks and play, and working with Billy is like sitting in your favorite comfortable couch. The word "tribute" makes me uncomfortable, but I do love the music, and the idea of creating some new interpretations of the music we played together is enticing. It's *our music*; no one can ever take it away from us. It's a spiritual thing. I am so privileged to have been able to play with Jimi, and to have played with—and to continue to play with—Billy Cox.

COX I have always enjoyed playing with Mitch. We have been friends for over 35 years, and I think we'll still be friends for a long time to come. ■

"JIMI WANTED TO MAKE A STATEMENT WITH THE 'STAR SPANGLED BANNER,' AND WHAT AN INCREDIBLE STATEMENT IT WAS." — COX

be best to get the original Experience back together, right?

MITCHELL Yes. Jimi, Noel and I did an interview with *Rolling Stone* wherein we'd announced the reformation of the original lineup, but things didn't feel quite right. Jimi called me at about 10 o'clock that same night, and he said, "So, how do you feel about it?" I said, "What do you mean?" and he said, "About Noel." I didn't say anything—I suppose I was waiting for someone else to say something! He said, "Well, we've played with Billy...don't you think it's time [to let Noel go]..." and I said, "Yes!"

There was a certain amount of resentment from Noel's side, bless his cotton socks. He was an adequate guitarist, and the bass was never his instrument. He played very proficiently, but he didn't care for the instrument at all. He didn't try to learn about the bass, and that used to bug the shit out of Jimi and myself.

Noel, and Chas [Chandler] as well, weren't interested in experimenting in the studio, either; it was all about getting it done quickly. Chas would always say, "The House of the Rising Sun" [the Animals hit song on which Chas was the bassist] cost \$30 to record," but, truthfully, that was meaningless to me and Jimi. That was then; things were changing. We liked to work hard in the studio; we lived for it. I had worked in the studio quite a bit before I had ever even met Jimi, and I'd never seen anyone work so naturally in the studio

attempted to learn what *not* to play and to leave the proper amount of space for the other musicians. And I do believe that the three of us did have great musical and personal communication.

GW Did the experience of playing together at Woodstock fuel the desire to shift back to the trio format?

MITCHELL It was something that was never said, but it didn't need to be said. In February of '70, after Jimi and I decided we wanted to play with Billy instead of Noel, a few other musicians were discussed as possible fourth additions, but the primary focus was to go back to the trio format. The *Band of Gypsies* was something Jimi wanted to see through to fruition; it was brilliant, he did it, enjoyed it, and then it was time to move on.

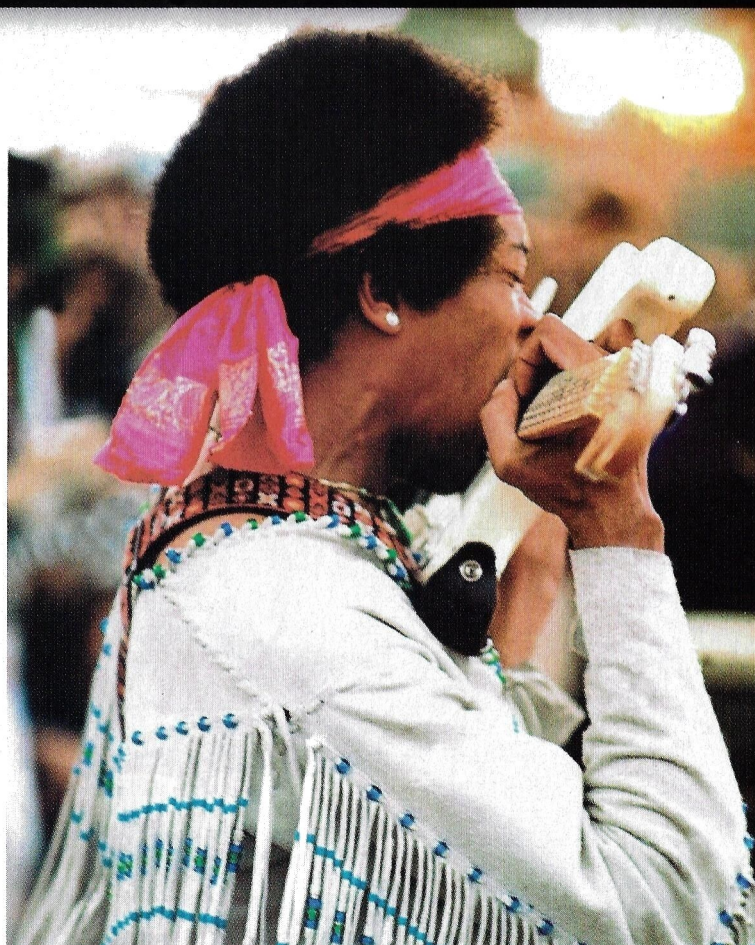
I had just moved into a wonderful giant house in England with loads of expenses—"It's been a wonderful year, hasn't it, dear?"—and I waited to see what would happen next. Jimi, Billy and I rehearsed in Los Angeles in the spring and immediately started the next tour.

GW After all Jimi had been through in the previous year, and all of the managerial hassles, what was the feeling in the trio like at that time?

COX It was great. Jimi knew where we wanted to go, and we knew how we were going to get there. We had some great shows, and a lot of fun onstage, and the studio mate-

GLORIOUS NOISE

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO RECREATING JIMI HENDRIX'S MIND-BLOWING WOODSTOCK RENDITION OF THE "STAR SPANGLED BANNER." **by Andy Aledort**



JIMI HENDRIX'S PERFORMANCE of the "Star Spangled Banner" at the conclusion of the Woodstock Music and Arts Festival on August 18, 1969, is one of the great electric guitar moments in the history of rock. His remarkable artistic vision enabled him to create a musical and political statement that crystallized the tumultuous Sixties youth counterculture movement into one daring, iconoclastic masterpiece of personal expression—and in under four minutes.

Today, hundreds of different guitars, amplifiers and effects pedal are readily available to any guitarist who has a decent credit limit. Back in Hendrix's heyday, however, the choice of equipment was far narrower. It's further testament to Hendrix's genius that the resourceful guitarist painted the musical equivalent of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel using a few pieces of off-the-rack gear.

For amplification, Hendrix generally used stock Marshall 100-watt Super Lead amplifiers, Model 1959, often referred to as a "Plexi" Marshall for its Plexiglas control panel. At Woodstock, Hendrix used two 100-watt tops with four 4x12 Marshall speaker cabinets, models 1960A (slant) and 1960B (straight). Each 100-watt head powered two 4x12 cabinets. Marshall 4x12 speaker cabinets from this era are often referred to as "basketweave" cabinets because of the heavy style of grille cloth they featured. Each housed four 25-watt Celestion "Greenback" speakers.

Hendrix's guitar at Woodstock was a stock white 1968 Fender Stratocaster with a maple fretboard. For the "Star Spangled Banner," Jimi set the toggle switch to the bridge pickup. He often purchased Fender Rock 'n' Roll light-gauge strings (.010, .013, .015, .026, .032, .038), but he also stated that he would

indicated in the transcription are subject to interpretation and reckoned in a way that reflects the guitarist's phrasing.

A black and white photograph of a musician performing on stage. The musician is seen from the back, wearing a long, fringed poncho and a dark bandana. They are holding a guitar and standing in front of a large, dense crowd of spectators. The stage is equipped with various musical instruments and equipment.

(continued on page 154)

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STAR SPANGLED (cont. from page 64)

(bar 11) and improvised embellishment (bars 13 and 14). Throughout this passage, the guitarist uses trills, legato finger slides, bends, hammer-ons and pull-offs in order to quickly

alternate between pairs of notes that are either one half step or one whole step apart.

BARS 20-25: This section begins with a pickup to the song's second theme (bar 21, at 1:01), wherein Hendrix begins by playing the melody before "taking it out" and going off on

a wild musical/sonic tangent. The mayhem commences in bar 22 as Hendrix bends a high E note (B string, 17th fret) up one whole step, gradually releases the bend and then strikes the open D, G and B strings repeatedly while applying whammy-bar dives. This is followed

bars 9-20

[B] First Theme (repeated) (0:26)

N.C.(E) *let ring*

9

11 *fdbk.* (0) 2/4 4 (5) 2 (4) 0 (F#) (B)

14 *fdbk.* 6 8 6 8 6 4 6 4 (4)* (0) 4 4 (E) *full* *grad. release* *fdbk.* (7) (7)

17 *full* (B) (E) 5 5 7 (7) (7) (7) 5 7 5 4 2 4 0 0 0 1 2

pitch: F#

pitch: F#

pitch: F#

bars 20-25 (0:57-1:14)

[C] Second theme (1:01)

N.C.(E) *wah on* *fdbk.* *full* *grad. release*

20 2/4 4 4 (4) 5 7 7 (7) (7) 17 (17) (17) (17)

pitch: G# G#

Free time

23 *w/bar* -2 1/2 -1 *w/bar* -1 1/2 -2 *grad. ascent* 17 18 19 3 3 3

25 17 18 19 -1 N.H. 15 15 15 0 (0) 15 3 3 3 0

BARS 31-33: At 1:38, Hendrix cleverly

emulates the sound of a “British ambulance” by alternately hammering on to Bb (fourth string, eighth fret) and E (fifth string, seventh fret) in a steady rhythm. (These two notes form what’s known as a *tritone* interval, so called because they are three whole steps apart.) He follows this with a middle-finger

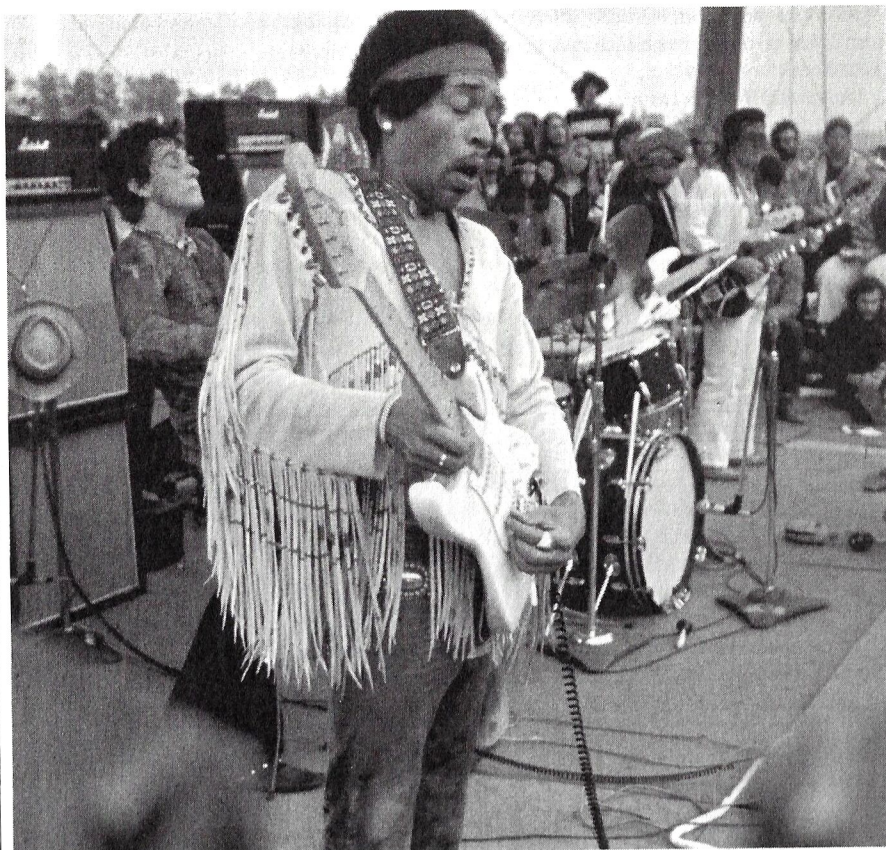
barre across the D, G and B strings at the eighth fret, sounding an Eb triad, which he then alternates with open strings, via pull-offs and hammer-ons. Hendrix then allows the open D and G strings to ring as he proceeds to repeatedly depress and release the whammy bar in varying increments.

Free time

 $w/\bar{b}ar$ [illegible]

BARS 34-47: In bar 34 (1:48), Hendrix plays another “British ambulance” lick, here on the B and G strings at the 13th and 12th frets, and slowly depresses the whammy bar, creating a sound akin to the Doppler effect. Then, in bar 35, he quickly hammers on and pull off between the 13th fret on the G string and the open G note while violently shaking the whammy bar. Random open strings ring as Hendrix manipulates the whammy bar, recreating the Doppler-effect sounds of fighter jets and the whistles of falling bombs. Hammer-ons and pull-offs between the 16th fret and the open bass strings in bar 37 are followed in bar 38 by random high-pitched bends on the top two strings and groups of open strings that are treated with whammy-bar manipulations. Hendrix momentarily comes back down to Earth in bars 40-43 (2:20) with a statement of the final phrase of the song’s second theme. He follows this in bars 43-47 with a three-note melody from “Taps,” which is based on the notes of an E major triad (E G# B).

BARS 48-56: Hendrix initiates the song’s final theme (“outro”) at 2:43. While playing this simple melody, he quickly turns the wah pedal on and off by rocking it back and forth, engaging the on/off switch each time he steps forward on the pedal. This is hard to do! Hendrix would facilitate this technique by removing the little rubber spacers at the front



ALLAN KOSS

trem. pick 1 1/2

fbdk. 1 1/2

*w/bar

2 full

fbdk.

full

vib. w/bar

*shake and dive simultaneously pitch: G#

In time ♩ = 92 (2:20)

N.C.(E) (B)

w/bar -2 1/2

w/bar -1

Slower ♩ = 46

(F#) (B)

Uni-vibe and wah

fbdk. fbdk.

pitch: C# A

45

16 12 12 16 12 12 16 12 12 16

At bar 52, Hendrix sustains a D# note at the fourth fret on the second string and holds this note through a series of feedback pitches

BARS 57-64: At 3:10, with the engaged wah creating dense washes of feedback, Hendrix states the last six bars of the song's melody before turning the Uni-Vibe back on

and playing an ascending sequence of major chords (A, C and D) with thumb-fretted bass notes, culminating with a crashing open E5 chord that feeds back gloriously. Hendrix then leads the band into "Purple Haze," which concludes the festival. ■

D Outro

N.C.(E)

N.C.(E)

(A)

(F#m)

(Bsus4)

wah on and off

*wah on and off

wah off

*Rock wah back and forth, quickly turning it on and off.

52

♩ = 60

fdbk.

-1

55

pitch: B

pitch: F#

don't pick

♩ = 66

$d = 66$

wah on

pitch: B

pitch: B

60

A

C

D

E5

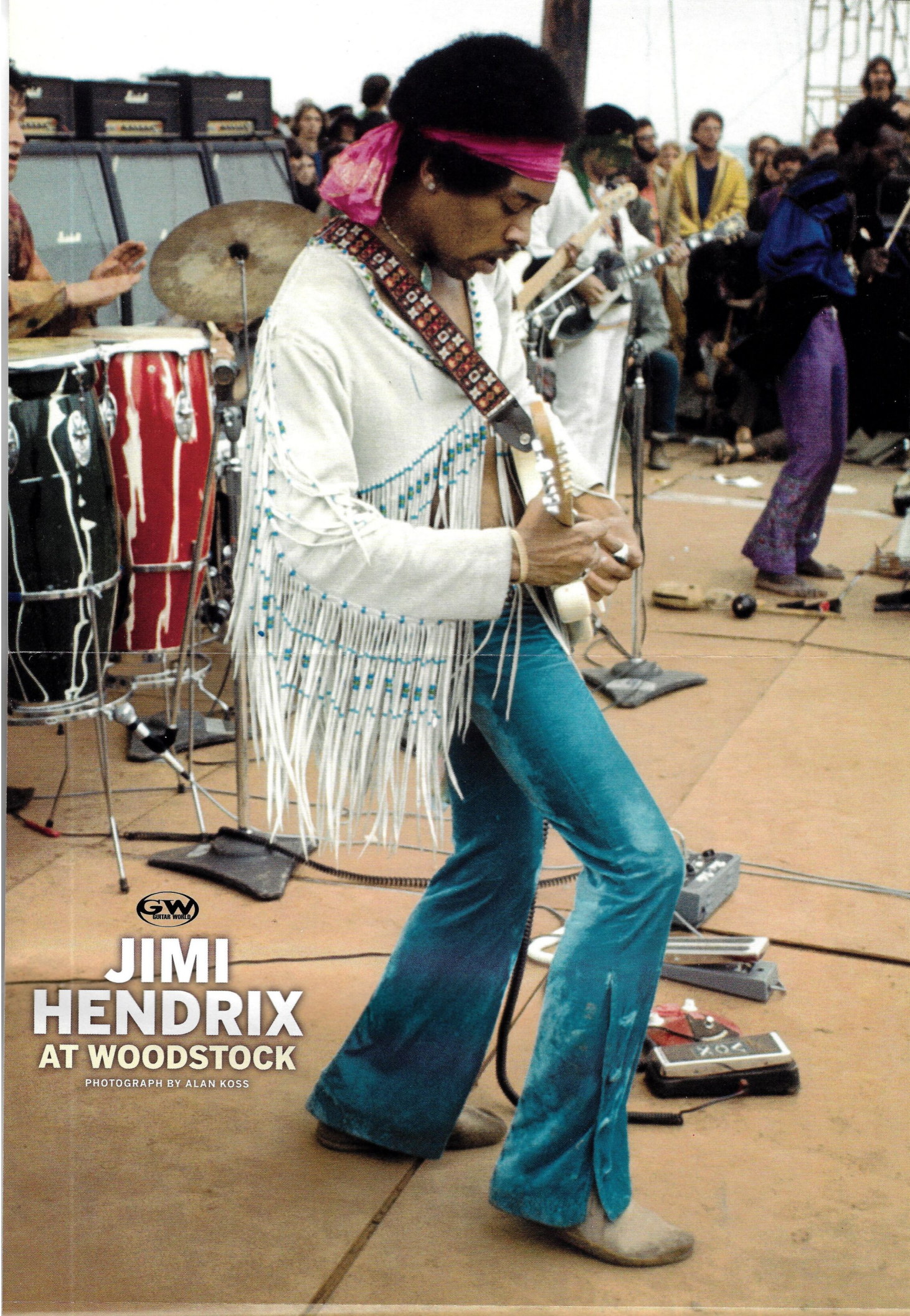
w/random fdbk.

62

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JIMI HENDRIX AT WOODSTOCK

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN KOSS